

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2457

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 5259

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, NATO

SUBJECT: DATE FOR DECEMBER COUNCIL MINISTERIAL MEETING

1. AT OCTOBER 31 MEETING, COUNCIL CONTINUED EXCHANGE OF INSTRUCTED VIEWS ON THE DATES FOR THE DECEMBER NAC MINISTERIAL. IT BECAME CLEAR THAT NO ALTERNATIVE DATES OTHER THAN DECEMBER 11 AND 12 COULD BE AGREED ON. EVEN THAT OPTION NOT DEFINITELY OPEN BECAUSE BRITISH, FRENCH AND BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTERS HAVE CONFLICTS ON THAT DATE, BUT IF SECRETARY WILL SOON CONFIRM HE CAN ATTEND 11TH AND 12TH BELGIANS WOULD MAKE "VERY GREAT EFFORT" TO REARRANGE THEIR MINISTERS SCHEDULES. FRENCH AND UK REPS WERE NOT SANGUINE THAT SUCH AN EFFORT WOULD SUCCEED WITH THEIR MINISTERS AT THIS LATE DATE. OTHER DELEGATIONS STILL FLEXIBLE ABOUT 10TH AND 11TH OR 11TH AND 12TH.

2. COMMENT: OPTIONS ON ALTERNATIVE DATES ARE RAPIDLY CLOSING. ONLY POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE DATES GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE NOW ARE DECEMBER 11TH AND 12TH, HOWEVER, PECK (UK) AND DE ROSE (FRANCE) MADE EXTREMELY FIRM STATEMENTS

THAT THEY COULD NOT COMMIT THEIR FOREIGN MINISTERS TO NAC MINISTERIAL ON DECEMBER 12.

MCAULIFFE

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